

Gulfport

MISSISSIPPI

at a

GLANCE

Inside this special
Back to School
edition:

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We're going GREEN!!!

In effort to save trees and other valuable resources, our newsletter will now be distributed electronically!

Our mission:

To provide efficient, effective and openly responsive municipal services to all citizens while promoting responsible economic development, preserving our heritage and enhancing our quality of life, and creating a better community.

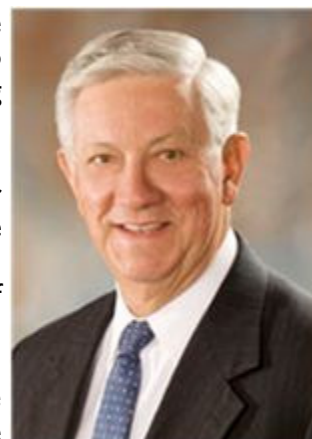
July/August 2009

From the Mayor's Desk

I want to thank each one of you for such a warm welcome and smooth transition into office. It was very comforting to know that when I started this new job I was given such a big head start.

The hard work that each of you has done in the past four years helped pave the way for this change in leadership. The employees of the City of Gulfport are a very solid team and I am excited and honored to work side-by-side with each of you in the coming years.

However, I suffer no illusions that the next four years will be easy. I want you to understand that the challenges we face are very real. There is a lot of work to be done.



This pervasive economic crisis has touched every city in America and Gulfport is far from immune. But our people have proven in the past four years that there is no challenge too big, no climb too steep; no problem we cannot solve if we act courageously and wisely.

The dark realities of the moment call for bold action on the part of every member of this new administration, every city council member, every city employee, every school teacher, doctor, waitress, and mechanic.

It will take a clear vision, difficult decision making, and an unselfish performance from every new leader who accepted a solemn oath back in June.

Even as we celebrate our bright future, we must remain mindful of the challenges that tomorrow will hold.

There are new jobs to create, new businesses to bring in, an economy to stabilize, old derelict buildings to remove and new ones to build, a new Port of Gulfport to welcome, a new harbor to fill with boats, and a new Jones Park to fill with families.

Part of that work began last month when we launched a city-wide effort to clean up and remove any and all Katrina evidence that still remains. We have to put the storm behind us, and it is time for all property owners in Gulfport to make a solid effort.

(Continued on page 2)

Meet Your City Council—*submitted by Kathy Johnson*



The members of the Gulfport City Council officially began their terms on July 6th ready to work on priority projects including enhancement of recreational facilities, downtown restoration, improving streets & drainage, as well as long-term strategic planning.

Council members are elected by a majority vote in their respective districts and serve a four-year term.

(Pictured back row, L-R: **R.Lee Flowers**, Ward 6; **Ricky Dombrowski**, Ward 5; **Kenneth Casey**, Ward 1; **Rusty Walker**, Ward 4. Front row, L-R: Mayor **George Schloegel**; **Libby Milner-Roland**, Ward 2; **Cara Pucheu**, Ward 7; **Ella Holmes-Hines**, Ward 7)

Mayor's Desk *(continued from page 1)*

We decided to begin downtown, and my office mailed letters to every property owner in the district asking them to submit their clean-up plans to the Building Department by the end of the month.

As of now, we have received a response from only one property owner.

That is simply unacceptable. We are very disappointed by the lack of response, which now forces the city to move forward without input from local property owners.

We plan to initiate our clean-up options within the coming weeks to remedy derelict and neglected properties in our city. A second letter is being mailed notifying property owners of our course of action and offering one final opportunity to engage.

We already live in a very good city, but to make it great, each of us will have to contribute. No matter what your specific job is with the city, we want you take ownership of the entire rebuilding process.

If you are driving through town and see a problem that needs correcting or if a neighbor mentions something to you at church, please don't hesitate to report it to the City Call Center (868-5700) so we can swiftly tend to those needs.

Brick-by-brick, together, with the help of every citizen and every employee, we will return Gulfport to its status as one of the nation's most vibrant and thriving communities.

Sincerely,

George Schloegel

Mayor

Important Insurance Info—submitted by Lynn Hill

The old saying goes, “Out of sight, out of mind.” Don’t let this be the case with your **marriage license** and **birth certificates** for your covered (insured) dependents.

Copies of these documents must be received by Human Resources prior to enrolling your spouse and/or dependent children for 2010. **Should you fail to provide them, you will not be able to carry your spouse and/or dependent children on your medical, dental, or vision insurance policies!** This applies to insured spouses and eligible dependent children only; the employee does not have to furnish his/her birth certificate.

If you don’t have these documents available, there’s still time!

To request a copy of birth certificates from the state of Mississippi, visit ms.gov or call 601-576-7981. For information on how to request vital records from other states, visit cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm. For copies of marriage licenses, contact the **Circuit Clerk** in the county where the license was issued.

Our annual Open Enrollment period is *tentatively* scheduled to begin in **October** this year. Open Enrollment is the time that you can make changes to your insurance coverage without having a “qualifying event”. Detailed information about open enrollment dates will be announced shortly.

First Choice Health Plan of Mississippi



First Choice Health Plan of Mississippi is the City’s network of cost effective physicians & hospitals committed to quality medicine and efficient healthcare.

First Choice offers over 7,000 physicians & about 700 physicians in the network. In December, **First Choice** welcomed **Garden Park Hospital** to the network.

Garden Park is the 130 bed acute care health facility located just north of Crossroads Shopping Center. Among other accolades, the hospital boasts of high patient satisfaction scores and an average Emergency Department wait of 33 minutes.

For more information about **Garden Park**, visit gardenparkmedical.com or call **228.575.7000**. For a complete network listing, visit **First Choice** on the web at firstchoicems.com or call **800.763.0380**.



Have some news? Let us know! Send your information to:

Fire - Donna Ladner
868-5954
dladner@gulfport-MS.gov

General Admin/Council/Legal -
Lauren Germany
868-5831
lgermany@gulfport-MS.gov

Leisure Services - Kerri Jones
868-5881
kjones@gulfport-MS.gov

Municipal Courts - Jennifer Jones-Snaer
868-4285
jsnaer@gulfport-MS.gov

Police - Mike Saucier
868-5900
msaucier@gulfport-MS.gov

Public Works - Yolanda McArthur
868-5741
ymcarthur@gulfport-MS.gov

Urban Development - Isaac Williams
868-5710
iwilliams@gulfport-MS.gov

GET FIT CHALLENGE

After 8 weeks of strong competition, Gulfport's first Get Fit Challenge ended on July 16th with 88 participants losing a combined 750 pounds!

20 teams started the challenge with an initial weigh-in, lab panel (cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure), and body measurements. During the last week of the challenge they were evaluated again. The number of pounds lost and the overall change in lab panels were both factors in determining the winners.

The awards ceremony was held on July 22nd at West Side Community Center and former Mayor Warr returned to help co-host the event.

The winning teams shared \$2500 of prize money donated by Island View Casino.

Team **HomeLine Slimdown** were the first place winners. Team Captain, **Karen McCarthy** and team members **Carey Bundt**, **Joanne Fayard**, and **Diane Ragas** each won \$250.

The **Waist Aways**, **Guardian Angels**, and **In-It-To-Win-It** placed second, third, and fourth respectively.



HomeLine Slimdown (above, L-R)
Carey Bundt, Diane Ragas, Karen McCarthy,
Joanne Fayard



Waist Aways (above, L-R)
Lark Bennett, Teresa Chapman, Deana Norton,
Stephenie Beningo



Guardian Angels (above, L-R)
Barbara Weatherford, Vicki Byrd, Claudia Salas,
Heather Dailey



In-It-To-Win-It (above, front row, L-R)
April Shavers, Sherry Dulaney, (back row, L-R)
Mary Collins, Pam Kennedy

Go FISH!

On April 8th, the City launched its pilot of the first Customer Service Class based on the world-famous Pike Place Fish Market in Seattle, WA. Here employees spent 12 hour days in miserable conditions, selling and packing fish. Then one day, they made a decision to become World Famous. And now YOU can, too!

The City of Gulfport partnered with the Professional Develop-

ment & Educational Outreach Division of USM and offered the City's second World Class Customer Care workshop using the **FISH!** philosophy.

The July 29th workshop helped participants better understand our roles in external and internal customer service. It demonstrated ways to provide what it takes to be World Class Customer Care Professionals.

FISH! is used in corporate and educational venues throughout the world – and now it's here at the City of Gulfport. More classes coming soon with dates announced shortly!

For more information about the FISH! Philosophy & to learn about Pike Place Fish Market, visit pikeplacefish.com.

FISH! Philosophy Principles

- **BE THERE** – It's about being completely focused on the moment & the person right in front of you.
- **PLAY** – and have fun at work.
- **MAKE THEIR DAY** – it's taking that extra step you didn't have to take, and taking a genuine interest in another person.
- **CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE** – we can either be negatively affected by external events or we can take charge of our own response!



School of FISH! (Front Row, L-R: Neal Stachura, Kathy Hale, Vera Edwards, Rita Davis, Nellie Henry, Terry Northington, April Shavers, Angela Moore. Back Row, L-R: Luke Thompson, Donna Fox, Mona Ervin, Tony Bishop, Mike Edwards, Cathy Williams, Reggie Sims, Colby Combs)

Get Fit Challenge Reception



"I would like to congratulate all of our employees who did accept the challenge," said **Cheryl Millender**, HR Manager. "In the City's eyes every one is a winner, because of the lifestyle changes that were made. I hope that the positive steps taken toward living a healthier lifestyle will continue."



Smart Spending Makes the Grade



The Summer holidays are ending soon and the time to head back to class is quickly approaching! Children dread it because it means the end of summer fun; for parents it often means opening the pocketbooks...again. The average consumer spends \$500 every year just on school supplies! But, for every shopping nightmare, there are creative ways to save money.

- Before hitting the stores, take inventory of what you already have. You may not need as many pens or pencils as you thought.
- Recycle! If last year's book bag is still holding up, don't buy a new one. Uniform shirts still fit? If they're in good shape, don't replace them.
- Buy educational staples year around to catch the best sales - and to help distribute the expense over several months. If you find a good deal on pencils or backpacks, buy them and stash away for when they're needed.
- Look for special deals online. There are coupons you can print from websites to use at a store location or to apply for a web purchase. Some say online purchases have advantages. Many times you can find "on-line only" deals on the web, but then have them shipped to the store for pick-up – this saves on shipping charges & time spent standing in lines.
- If your child is headed for college, take an active role in textbook shopping. It's an enormous expense with an average annual cost of \$898. Check out textbook sites like amazon.com or campusbooks.com for great deals on used books which can often be found at a savings of 58% or more!



Get Into the Groove

Jody Johnson Pawel is a Licensed Social Worker and author of over 100 parent education resources. Pawel says, "Like so many things in life, back-to-school time is an exercise of conditioning" and suggests some tips to help the transition a little smoother:

- Two to three weeks before school starts, start moving back to the school-year bedtime by half-hour increments. At the same time, have children wake earlier each day until they have practiced their school sleep schedule for about a week
- Make an effort to re-establish regular meal times & talk about their day
- Teach them how to plan their schedules so things go smoother before, during and after school. Have them plan a way to remember their homework, lunch & backpacks every day. Also help them plan times to complete their homework, have after-school snacks, do chores, and other activities
- Encourage them to organize their folders and backpack for the big day

Remember when...

Time changes everything! Here is a look back at how students prepared to go back-to-school...in 1989!

- Stone-wash jeans, leather aviator jackets, Air Jordans & parachute pants (just like MC Hammer's) were "must-haves" on back-to-school shopping lists
- Girls' hairstyles were all about the spiral perm & guys were sporting rat tails
- My Prerogative (Bobby Brown), Straight Up (Paula Abdul), Girl You Know its True (Milli-Vanilli) & Every Rose has its Thorn (Poison) was playing on the radio
- People began watching Seinfeld on TV instead of doing homework
- The Nintendo Game Boy made its debut in stores and in the backpacks of countless American students
- Young people celebrated the end of the summer at the 20th anniversary of Woodstock

Study-up on Back-to-School Health

In all the hustle and planning for the first day of school, buying clothes, pencils & back packs are normally the priorities of preparation. But Pamela F. Gallin, M.D., a pediatrician with Children's Hospital of New York and author of *The Savvy Mom's Guide to Medical Care*, provides parents and caregivers with a few tips to help their kids get a healthy start to the academic year:

- **I can see clearly now!**
Have your child's vision screened. If your child wears glasses, be sure the prescription is current.
- **Selective hearing or something serious?**
Have your child's hearing tested. Many school-age children have never had their hearing tested. If your child is listening to the television or music at a very loud volume, or tends to favor one ear over the other when listening to you speak, it may be a sign of hearing loss.
- **This will only hurt for a second...**
Are immunizations up-to-date? In Mississippi, immunization against *Hepatitis B, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough (Pertussis), Polio, Hib (Haemophilus influenzae Type b), Childhood Pneumonia, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Chicken Pox (Varicella)* are mandated by law. If your child is heading to college, then she may be due for adult vaccinations including a *Tetanus* booster or *Hepatitis A or B* vaccines. Immunization schedules can be found at on the MS Department of Health's web page: msdh.state.ms.us.
- **The medicine cabinet:**
If your child takes medication for diabetes, asthma, or another chronic problem, school nurses and teachers must be made aware of your child's needs, especially if they are the ones who administer the medicine. Be sure to speak with them about these procedures before school begins, and work out an emergency course of action in case there is a problem.
- **The importance of a balanced diet:**
Nutrition awareness is a must! Studies show that children who eat breakfast are more alert in class. Also, be sure that your child is having a balanced, nutritious lunch, whether it is one you send or one they buy in the cafeteria.
- **First-day butterflies!**
Is your child anxious and apprehensive? Most children are anxious about the new school year. It normally takes about a month for children to adjust to new situations. If after a few weeks, your child continues to be anxious and apprehensive, bring this to the attention of his or her teacher so that you can identify the source of his anxiety and work out a solution.
- **On-call:**
Are your up-to-date emergency phone numbers on file? Make sure that the school and your child know how to reach you or another caregiver at all times – your child's school should always know how to reach you if there is an issue that needs to be discussed.

The Wellness Clinic can help with some of these and other important back-to-school "to-do's". Call **863.6760** for an appointment!



Back to School Fun Facts:

An estimated \$7.5 billion will be spent on school clothes for children

Females are expected to comprise the majority of college students - about 10.6 million compared to 7.7 million males

The nation's apple production is 9.3 billion; and most apples given to teachers were most likely grown in Washington, which accounts for more than half the nation's total production

The government spends an average of \$9,138 per student

Mississippi students scored an average of 19 in Composite Score on the ACT

In Memoriam



Charles "Charlie" Thurman retired as a Police Captain in 1994 but returned in 2006 to oversee the vehicle maintenance shop.

He will be fondly remembered for providing the best service to every officer and every vehicle that passed through for repair and for the dignity & respect he gave to others.

From his friends Police Department: "**Charlie**, you will be truly be missed". "All of the men and women of the police department were blessed for the time we spent with you".

Exchanging Experiences

In March, the police department hosted Criminal Justice students from Canada in an exchange program. The week-long program is sponsored by USM allows each student to learn the differences in policing between Canada and the United States. All of the exchange students are Criminal Justice Majors at Campus Notre-Dame-de-Foy.

Officers of the Month

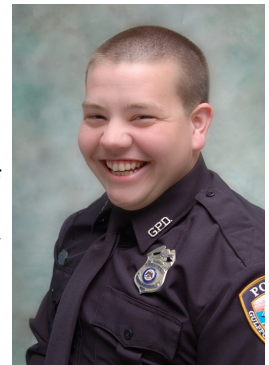


Officer **Charles Pettway** was nominated as Officer of the Month for **March 2009**. An 8-year veteran of the Police Department, **Officer Pettway** is credited with embracing the effort to reduce noise pollution

throughout the city by enforcing the City's noise ordinance. Loud music is a common complaint from Gulfport's citizens. **Officer Pettway** is responsible for issuing 8% of all noise ordinance citations written between January 2007 and March 2009. According to his supervisor, "**Charles** is one of the most dedicated individuals I've ever worked with. His focus is doing his job and doing it right, every time."

Officer **Ryan Stachura** was nominated as Officer of the Month for **May 2009**. A 4-year veteran of the Police Department, **Officer Stachura** is credited with having a solid relationship with citizens,

which often leads to information for criminal arrests. **Officer Stachura's** ability to resolve criminal acts ranges from identifying juveniles involved with malicious mischief to the apprehension of armed robbery suspects. His supervisor remarks, "**Ryan** is respected by his peers & supervisors for his energy and eagerness to learn and setting high standards of job performance."



Awards & Recognition



Congratulations to **Detective Chris Langenbach** who was recognized as the **2009 Officer of the Year** by Gulfport Exchange Club. **Langenbach** received this award for his dedication on solving a recent murder and bringing the suspect to justice. "**Chris** has

shown true compassion and understanding to the victim's family and it is through this dedication that the suspect awaits trial this very day to answer for his crime." says his supervisor.

Sgt. Phil Kincaid was named **Officer of the Year for 2008** for Gulfport Rotary Club. **Kincaid** has been instrumental in the apprehension of dangerous fugitives & taken the lead in suppressing the sale of counterfeit merchandise.

His supervisor says, "**Phil** has a unique ability to identify and solve problems, which is a valuable asset to the department and the citizens we serve. He always places the welfare of the citizen and his fellow officers first."



Hubert Villeneuve said in a letter of appreciation after his return home: "What we have done in this trip is a unique experience for a student like me and it will be very useful in my future career".

Pictured at right Alexandre Talbot and Officer Jonathon Grimes



Municipal Court Briefing—submitted by Jennifer Jones-Snaer

On July 2nd, Gulfport Municipal Court was awarded a Records Preservation Grant in the amount of \$460K to preserve the court's paper filing system. When the Court moves into the Robert J. Curry Public Safety Center, during late 2010, space for paper files will be limited.

Odell Thompson, Jr., Court Administrator (pictured right), has strived to make the court "paperless." After Hurricane Katrina damaged thousands of court files it has been his goal to reduce the possibility of this happening again. Going paperless means that the files would be protected from destruction since they would be converted to digital files and backed-up off site.

This grant will also allow the court to provide secure documents and eliminate delays in document requests from City departments and individuals by having the capability of retrieving the files electronically. In addition, this software will allow direct communication with the Gulfport Police Officers on the street who will be able to serve warrants and make arrests more promptly. This will have a positive impact on the crime in the community. Finally, citizens will be able to make payments online instead of coming to the court.

"This will allow the court and the police department to become paperless and migrate towards paper on demand (P.O.D.) because *in our environment* it is not the paper that's important, it is the information on the paper. So, now we will print it only when it is needed!" says **Odell**.

The P.O.D. system will save more than just time. It will allow the court to reduce an estimated \$15,500 annually by reducing the cost of supplies & labor now incurred in the filing process. Everyone at the Court is excited about the upcoming changes!



Leisure Services: Hershey Track & Field Games—submitted by Larry Davis

The Hershey Track & Field Games is the longest-running youth fitness program of its kind in north America and is designed to encourage physical fitness among youth and emphasize sportsmanship. The meet brings participants from all over the country to Hershey, PA. to compete in the four-day National Final.

Of the five participants from the Gulf Coast, two were from Gulfport.

Acie Stewart, III will compete in the 50 meter dash, and A'Darius Steele in the 800 meter run. Leisure Services' own **Larry Davis** is the state director of the Hershey Track & Field Games and will also attend the event in August.



MILESTONES**25 YEARS**

Donald Knox

15 YEARS

David Bertucci

Mary Collins

Gregory Griffin

Mark Headrick

Norman Heflin

Dewey Himel, Sr.

David Nigles

Carl Washington

10 YEARS

John Barnes

Greg Holmes

Ronald Kirkland

Frank Mazzola

Jason Payne

April Robinson

Jason Wuest

5 YEARS

Oneila Byrd

Charles Davis

James Doss

PROMOTIONS

Samuel Acosta, Patrol Officer I

Leonard Papania, Deputy Police Chief

Alvin Kingston, Patrol Officer II

Kevin Raymond, Police Commander

Josh Skaggs, Patrol Officer II

NEW HIRES

Devonte Harris, Leisure Services

Robert Langlois, Leisure Services

Christopher Harris, Police Department

Christine Massey, Police Department

Tiffany Neves, Police Department

Julius Payne, Leisure Services

Clayton Shaw, Police Department

BIRTHDAYS**AUGUST**

1-Larry Davis, Henry Levins, Anthony Stewart

2-Elvin Stewart

3-John Alexander, Richard Hophan

4-Bradley Walker

6-Steven Chamberlain

7-Brandon Dearman, John Pettway

8-Brittany Allen, Tony Alves, Jarred Fore, Gus Wesson

10-Cassie Necaise, Christian Oatis, Verlina Odom,
Odell Thompson11-Barbara Bozek, Paul Brown, James Cowan, Leslee Curry,
Louis Palmer

12-Andrew Dedeaux, Danny Meadors

13-Bruce Griebel

14-Brenda McKay

15-Lindsay Boggan, Daniel Castillo

16-Adam Dye, Bill Fullks, Carl Gannon, Sandra Wyche

17-Rhonda Griffin, Max Igich

18-Kini Gonsoulin, Lance Rasonet

19-William Collins, Jamie Jenkins, Lizzie Prybil, Doris Schultz

20-Christopher Henderson

21-Robert Beaugez, Charles Hanson, Ronald Kirkland

23-Glen Hughes

24-Devonte Harris, Kathy Johnson, Gregory Lott

25-Lonnie Necaise

28-Joanne Fayard, Christina Thompson

30-Jacob Burnett, Sharon Spiers

31-Brian Stewart

SEPTEMBER

2-Ken Adams, Matthew Boone, Tera Hall

3-Andrew Capiola

4-Ryan Bennett

6-Duane Merrill, Michelle Ponder, William Stover

7-Rodney Ladner, Charlie Pope, Bryan Yates

8-Ian Barna, Kevin Beech, Walter Jenkins, Isaac Williams

9-Nancy Chisholm, Merriman McCaleb

10-Joan Head

11-Brian Deming, Kerry Hall, Heather McCarty

12-Adam Dedeaux, Deana Norton, Bryan Watson

13-James Clayton, Tonya McNeal, Cathy Williams

14-Angela Pittman, Mike Shaw, Christopher Smith

15-Luis Garcia, Donna Ladner

16-Samantha Cotton-Taylor, James Johnson, Dale Wicks

17-Martha Carson, Ken Payne, Debra Williams

18-Jerry Cook

19-John Edwards, Howard Irgang

21-Steven Ramsey

22-Diane Miller

23-Barry Oakes, Randall Slocum

24-Sonny Bond, Luke Davidson, Eric Dedeaux,
Charles Scarborough, Andrew Taylor

26-Robert Bunch, Robert Langlois

27-Robert McBeth

30-Kathy Hale, Amber Moran

Got Better Than “Glance”?

Now's here's your chance...to rename our newsletter! *Gulfport at a Glance* just doesn't seem to capture the spirit of our newsletter so we're giving it a new name. But it's up to you to decide what it will be!

Send your suggestions to Lauren Germany at lgermany@gulfport-MS.gov or by inter-office mail to the Human Resources office. Submissions should be received by **September 15th**. Finalists will be published in the September/October edition and employees will cast their vote on their favorite!